

**Kent County REACH
(Referral for Employment, Asset
Development, Cooperation, and Hope)
Grant Project**

**17th Circuit Court
Request for Proposals**

**Issued by:
The State Court Administrative Office
of the Michigan Supreme Court**

Part I - Introduction

A. General Information

This Request for Proposal (RFP) provides interested bidders with information to prepare and submit proposals for consideration by the State Court Administrative Office (SCAO) to evaluate the 17th Circuit Court's REACH 1115 grant funded project. This RFP is issued by the SCAO with the understanding that the 17th Circuit Court's REACH 1115 grant project will be implemented and that all required contracts necessary to begin the project will be executed prior to the start of the project

B. Background Information

The Health and Human Services National Child Support Strategic Plan¹ states that families come first and child support should be a reliable source of income for families. Nationwide, approximately \$105 billion is owed in past due child support. Michigan accounts for approximately \$11 billion of that amount. Kent County has \$428 million owed in past due support.

In July 2007, *Assessing Child Support Arrears in Nine Large States and the Nation*² found that 70 percent of child support arrearages were accumulated by noncustodial parents who had either no reported income or reported income of \$10,000 a year or less. Studies, such as that undertaken by Michigan's Underground Economy Task Force, have noted that often noncustodial parents do not participate in child support proceedings because they believe that the issue will go away if they ignore it. Therefore, nonparticipation creates default judgments entered for high amounts that often do not reflect the noncustodial parent's actual ability to pay. Once the parent discovers the magnitude of the debt owed and compares it to a present ability to pay, the resulting feeling of futility causes some to run away from the situation – escaping into the underground economy where their assets cannot be traced and where they hide from support enforcement and other officials.

In addition, some parents are unable to manage their finances. Individuals having financial difficulty or trying to avoid detection tend to use predatory or high-cost services that further reduce the funds available for the family. Other parents lack the skills to find or maintain employment. Noncustodial parents, who might otherwise be able to support their children, find themselves struggling because they have inadequate job skills to secure employment, lack financial management skills to maximize the use of the funds that they have, and do not understand how to build assets to improve a private enterprise or obtain stable housing or a stable lifestyle.

Assets for Independence (AFI) programs assist low-income individuals with financial skill improvement and asset-building opportunities. AFI data shows: 75 percent of individual development accounts (IDA) holders are women, 77 percent of IDA participants live with children, and only 24 percent of the account holders are married. This data suggests that many IDA account holders are custodial parents (CP) and the program does not often serve asset-poor noncustodial parents (NCP).³ A goal of this grant is to increase the number of NCPs as IDA account holders.

¹ http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cse/pubs/2004/Strategic_Plan_FY2005-2009.pdf

² Sorensen, Sousa, Schaner; *Assessing Child Support Arrears in Nine Large States and the Nation*; July 11, 2007.

³ http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/afi/Final_AFI_8th_Report.pdf

Inner City Christian Federation (ICCF) is the AFI grantee in Kent County. This organization has expertise in financial education, credit repair, and asset-building and serves individuals with household incomes below 200 percent of the poverty level. Hope Network is another organization providing work-skill development and on-site work experience with a goal of permanent job placement to the unemployed. ICCF, Hope Network, and the Kent County Friend of the Court all have significant connection to low-income individuals; however, each operates independently without using the others' services or providing information about each other to those they serve.

This project seeks to improve the long-term wellbeing of children involved in child support cases by developing a collaborative effort that serves noncustodial parents' and improves their financial literacy, work skills, and asset building efforts.

C. Contract Award

The contract entered into will be the contract deemed most advantageous to the SCAO and the 17th Circuit Court (circuit court). The SCAO reserves the right to consider proposals or modifications to proposals received at any time before the award is made, if such action is in the best interest of the SCAO.

If a contract is awarded, the selected bidder will be required to comply with the contract provisions in Part II of this RFP, which will be a part of the contract.

D. Rejection of Proposals

The SCAO reserves the right to reject any and all proposals received as a result of this RFP, or to negotiate separately with any source whatsoever in any manner necessary to serve the best interest of the SCAO and the circuit court. This RFP is made for informational or planning purposes only. The SCAO does not intend to award a contract solely on the basis of any response made to this request or otherwise pay for the information solicited or obtained.

E. Incurring Costs

The SCAO is not liable for any cost incurred by the prospective contractors prior to issuance of the contract.

F. Inquiries

Questions that arise as a result of this RFP must be submitted by e-mail to **Suzy Crittenden** at CrittendenS@courts.mi.gov, subject line of e-mail "Inquiry-Kent County REACH Grant Project." **All questions must be submitted on or before January 28, 2011.** The SCAO will respond to all questions received during a conference call on **February 9, at 1:30 p.m..** The call in number is: 1-866-537-1617; the pass code is 8785771.

G. Preproposal Meetings

If deemed necessary, the SCAO may schedule proposal meetings with individual bidders to address questions about individual bidders' RFPs. Answers that change or substantially clarify the RFP will be affirmed in writing.

H. Amendment to the RFP

In the event it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RFP, addenda will be provided to all bidders.

I. Response Date

To be considered, the proposal must arrive at the SCAO, 925 West Ottawa, P.O. Box 30048, Lansing, MI 48909, on or before **February 18, 2011, at 5:00 p.m.** Bidders who mail proposals should allow adequate delivery time to ensure timely receipt of their proposals. **Please submit FIVE copies of completed proposal.**

J. Proposals

To be considered, bidders must submit a complete response to this RFP, using the format provided in Part V. Proposals must be signed by an official authorized to bind the bidder to its provisions. The proposal must remain valid for at least 90 days.

K. Acceptance of Proposal Content

The contents of the proposal of the successful bidder may become contractual obligations if a contract ensues. Failure of the successful bidder to accept these obligations may result in cancellation of the award.

L. Economy of Preparation

Proposals should be prepared simply and economically, providing a straightforward, concise description of the bidder's ability to meet the requirements of the RFP. Emphasis should be on completeness and clarity of content.

M. Oral Presentation

Bidders who submit a proposal may be required to make an oral presentation of their proposal to the SCAO. The presentation provides an opportunity for the bidder to clarify its proposal to ensure thorough mutual understanding. If necessary, the SCAO will schedule the presentations.

N. Prime Contractor Responsibilities

The selected contractor will be required to assume responsibility for all services offered in the proposal whether or not he/she possesses them within his/her organization. Further, the SCAO will consider the selected contractor to be the sole point of contact with regard to contractual matters, including payment of any and all charges resulting from the contract.

O. Independent Contractor Status

The selected contractor will act as an independent contractor in the performance of duties under the contract reached between the contractor and the SCAO. Accordingly, the selected contractor will be responsible for payment of all taxes, including federal, state, and local taxes, arising out of the selected contractor's activities in accordance with a contract, including by way of illustration but not limitation, federal and state income tax, social security tax, unemployment insurance tax, and any other tax or business license fee as required.

Because the selected contractor is engaged in his/her own independent business, the contractor will not be eligible for, and will not participate in, such benefits as pension plans, health or other fringe benefit plans, holiday pay, sick pay, and vacation pay of the SCAO or the Supreme Court, or such other rights or provisions arising out of a contract of hire or employer/employee relationship as a result of a contract. No workers' compensation insurance will be obtained by the SCAO concerning the selected contractor.

P. Time Schedule for Beginning and Completing the Evaluation

A complete schedule of all activities and a breakdown of the basis for all costs associated with the evaluation must be submitted. The successful bidder will be required to submit a detailed evaluation plan, schedule of activities, and the cost breakdowns to the SCAO no later than **February 18, 2011**.

Q. Contract Payment Schedule

The SCAO shall make payments to the selected contractor as negotiated in the written contract. Payment will be made contingent upon submission of timely and complete reports and satisfactory progress on the evaluation as outlined in the evaluation design and schedule of activities.

R. News Releases

News releases pertaining to this RFP on the service, study, or project to which it relates shall not be made without prior approval by the SCAO.

Part II - Contract Provisions

These nonnegotiable provisions will be included in all contracts negotiated with the SCAO.

A. The SCAO's Source of Funds-Termination

The SCAO's payment of funds for purposes of this contract is subject to and conditional upon the availability of funds for such purposes, being federal and/or state and/or private funds. No commitment is made by the SCAO to continue or expand such activities. The SCAO may terminate this contract immediately upon written notice to the contractor at any time prior to the completion of this contract if, in the opinion of the SCAO, funding becomes unavailable for this service or such funds are restricted.

B. Review and Monitoring Reports

The contractor shall comply with all project and fiscal review reporting procedures as are or may be established by the SCAO. The contractor shall also comply with all reporting procedures established by the SCAO in completion of monitoring and progress reports at time intervals and on forms specified by the SCAO. Any additional reports as deemed necessary by the SCAO shall be made and submitted by the contractor upon request.

C. Examination and Maintenance of Records

The contractor shall permit the SCAO, or any of its identified agents, access to the files being utilized at any reasonable time to review the operation of the project. The contractor shall retain all books, records, or other documents relevant to this contract for six years after final payment, at its cost. Federal auditors, the SCAO auditors, and any persons duly authorized by the SCAO shall have full access to and the right to examine and audit any of the material during said period. If an audit is initiated prior to the expiration of the six-year period, and extends past that period, all documents shall be maintained until the audit is completed. The SCAO shall provide findings and recommendations of audits to the contractor. The SCAO shall adjust future payments or final payment if the findings of an audit indicate overpayment or underpayment to the contractor in the period prior to the audit. If no payments are due and owing to the contractor, the contractor shall immediately refund all amounts that may be due the SCAO. The contractor shall assure, as a condition of any sale or transfer of ownership of the contractor's agency, that the new purchaser or owner maintains the above-described books, records, or other documents for any unexpired portion of the six-year period after final payment under this contract or the contractor shall otherwise maintain said records as the SCAO may direct. If business operations cease, the contractor shall maintain the records as the SCAO may direct.

The contractor shall, as a provision of the contract between the contractor and the SCAO, assure that the SCAO may make reasonable inquiries of the auditors relating to audit work papers and, furthermore, that the SCAO may review the auditor's work papers in support of the audit.

D. Insurance Coverage

The contractor shall provide and maintain public liability insurance in such amounts as necessary to cover all claims arising out of the contractor's operations under the terms of the contract and provide proof of such insurance coverage to the SCAO prior to the

effective date of this contract. Unemployment compensation coverage and workers' compensation insurance shall be maintained in accordance with applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

E. Liability

The contractor shall indemnify, save, and hold harmless the SCAO against any and all expense and liability of any kind that the SCAO may sustain, incur, or be required to pay arising out of this contract; provided, however, that the provisions of this paragraph shall not apply to liabilities or expenses caused by or resulting from the willful or negligent acts or omissions of the SCAO or any of its officers or employees. Further, in the event the contractor becomes involved in or is threatened with litigation, the contractor shall immediately notify the SCAO and the SCAO may enter into such litigation to protect the interests of the SCAO.

F. Compliance with Civil Rights Laws

Compliance with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (PL 93-112, 87 Stat 394)

Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) (PL 101-336, 104 Stat 328)

The contractor shall not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment with respect to hire, tenure, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, because of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, height, weight, or marital status pursuant to 1976 PA 453, Section 209. The contractor shall also comply with the provisions of the Persons with Disabilities Civil Rights Act, 1976 PA 220, and Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, PL 93-112, 87 Stat 394, which states that no employee, client, or otherwise qualified handicapped individual shall, solely by reason of his handicap, be excluded from participation, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any project or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

The contractor shall comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), PL 101-336, 104 Stat 328, which prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities and provides enforcement standards. Further, the contractor shall comply with all other federal, state, or local laws, regulations, and standards, and any amendments thereto, as they may apply to the performance of this contract.

G. Compliance with the Federal Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988

The contractor agrees to abide by the Federal Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 (49 CFR Part 29 subpart F).

H. Compliance with the Executive Order 12549: "Debarment and Suspension"

The contractor must assure that the contractor and any subcontractors that are used are not debarred or suspended or otherwise excluded or ineligible for participation in federal assistance projects under Executive Order 12549, "Debarment and Suspension."

I. Compliance with Federal Debt Status OMB Circular A-129

The contractor assures to the best of its knowledge and belief it is not delinquent in repayment of any federal debt (Federal Debt Status OMB Circular A-129).

J. Publication - Approval and Copyright

The SCAO shall have copyright, property, and publication rights in all written or visual material or other work products developed in connection with this contract. The contractor shall not publish or distribute any printed or visual material relating to the services provided under this contract without prior written permission of the SCAO.

K. Lobbying

The contractor assures no funds received for work performed on the contract will be used for lobbying. As required by 31 USC 1352, no funds under this contract shall be paid by or on behalf of the contractor to any person for influencing an officer or employee of any agency, member of Congress, officer or employee of Congress, or employee of a member of Congress in connection with the award of any federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement or in connection with their extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification. If funds other than federal funds are used for such purpose, the contractor agrees to submit Standard Form LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities."

L. Cancellation of Contract

Cancellation of the contract by the SCAO may be for: (a) default of the contractor, or (b) lack of further need for the service. Default is defined as the failure of the contractor to fulfill an obligation of the contract. In the case of default by the contractor, the SCAO may immediately cancel the contract without further liability to the SCAO or its employees, procure the services from other sources, and hold the contractor responsible for any excess costs occasioned thereby. In the event the SCAO no longer needs the service specified in the contract due to project changes, changes in law, rules or regulations, relocation of offices, or a reduction in appropriations for the project, the SCAO may cancel the contract without further liability to the SCAO or its employees by giving the contractor written notice of such cancellation thirty (30) days prior to the date of cancellation. The contractor may terminate the contract upon thirty (30) days written notice to the SCAO at any time prior to the completion of the contract period.

M. Closeout

When the contract is concluded or terminated, the contractor shall provide the SCAO, within thirty (30) days after conclusion or termination, with all financial, performance, and other reports required as a condition of the contract. The SCAO shall make payments to the contractor for allowable reimbursable costs not covered by previous payments. The contractor shall immediately refund to the SCAO any payments or funds advanced to the contractor in excess of allowable reimbursable expenditures.

N. Continuing Responsibilities

Termination, conclusion, or cancellation of the contract shall not be construed so as to terminate the ongoing responsibilities of the contractor or rights of the SCAO.

O. Disputes

The contractor shall notify the SCAO in writing of its intent to pursue a claim against the SCAO for breach of any terms of the contract. No suit may be commenced by the contractor for breach of the contract prior to the expiration of ninety (90) days from the date of such notification. Within this ninety (90) day period, the contractor, at the request of the SCAO, must meet with the State Court Administrator for the purpose of attempting

resolution of the dispute, which may include participation in mediated dispute resolution services.

Part III - Project Information

REACH Project Purpose and Process

The purpose of this grant is to implement a demonstration project that will increase the financial well-being of children through the collaboration of local agencies that provide services to educate and assist low income noncustodial parents in building assets and in improving their financial literacy skills.

The local county child support agency, Kent County Friend of the Court (KCFOC) will implement the project in Kent County as a partnership with the local Assets for Independence (AFI) agency and a local nonprofit agency (Hope Network) specializing in workforce development. The grant will be used to employ two fulltime contractual employees who will provide financial assessment, financial management and planning, employment counseling, and referral to AFI's IDA program for 540 primarily noncustodial parents.

Kent County FOC will identify individuals who are currently served by the AFI agency and identify new individuals through an existing child support specialty court who will benefit from services offered by the AFI agency and by the workforce development agency. Kent County FOC will provide the following services in support of the AFI agency: 1) Modifying support to assist the parents' financial management efforts and business start up efforts; 2) Provide intensive judicial supervision to encourage participation; 3) Work with families to develop voluntary agreements to compromise arrears commensurate with an asset management plan; 4) Provide parenting time and custody services to encourage cooperation to develop family wealth.

The initial 20 participants selected for ICCF (AFI) services, and all participants thereafter, will meet individually with ICCF staff to review program requirements and determine regular deposit requirements. Individualized action plans are developed. The child support staff is performing intensive case management beginning with the initial referrals and continuing throughout the entire project. Modifications to child support orders are taking place to increase and decrease the charging as appropriate. All orders that qualify for pay plans and arrearage forgiveness are pursued and obtained.

KCFOC will work with ICCF to identify existing program participants who also have child support cases. Upon identifying those ICCF participants who have child support cases, KCFOC will initiate support reviews, and with ICCF assistance, determine the participant's ability to pay. The KCFOC will also modify its enforcement to exempt some asset-seizing functions. Finally, the KCFOC will work with the parents and state officials to develop a voluntary agreement to compromise support arrears that are beyond the ICCF participant's ability to pay.

KCFOC will develop a screening protocol with ICCF and Hope Network to identify support nonpayers who might benefit from a referral to ICCF and Hope Network. KCFOC will screen potential candidates and offer them the opportunity to participate in a special court docket that will continuously have hearings to monitor the individual's success in completing the program. ICCF will receive referrals from KCFOC and will collect necessary documentation during the initial interview. In the event there are more applicants than available program slots, a waiting list will be maintained and subsequent selection for participation will be based on the application date. Staff will make contact with new participants as program slots become available. Hope Network will receive referrals from KCFOC for participant job training and placement. Cross

referrals between ICCF and Hope Network will be standard practice; when a participant engaged with ICCF financial counseling needs assistance with job placement, the participant will be sent to Hope, and when a participant secures employment the participant will be sent to ICCF for assistance with managing finances.

ICCF staff members meet individually with participants to assess their ability to successfully complete their goals in the time frame allowed prior to program admission. Program requirements are explained, documentation is completed, regular deposit expectations are determined, and an individualized plan of action is developed. To create an individualized plan the counselor reviews the unique needs of the participant. This allows counselors and participants to develop goals related to the asset they strive for (postsecondary education, job training or home ownership, or microenterprise) to permit attainment in the time frame allowed by the program parameters. Participants who wish to pursue postsecondary education, job training or home ownership receive support services from ICCF and participants who wish to pursue microenterprise development will be referred to Grand Rapids Opportunities for Women (GROW), which also serves men. These two programs have offered IDA programs since 2001 and 1995 respectively.

Participants meet with program site staff to develop and revise budgets and receive a credit analysis regularly. The budget helps to determine the monthly savings goal; the staff member and the participants also develop a plan to resolve credit and debt issues that are barriers to their asset purchase.

Financial and economic education is provided individually and/or in group sessions (depending on the client needs), which is followed by asset specific education directly related to the participant's asset choice. In addition, this is followed with ongoing individual sessions and/or support help to ensure the participant's success in budgeting, saving, and employment.

Participants are referred to the partnering financial institution that participates in the asset building program locally. There is an existing agreement between ICCF and Chemical Bank that enables participants with barriers to owning a bank account to take part in this program. ICCF opens the account in partnership with the program participant and is named "account custodian." Participants are unable to make withdrawals from this account without signed authorization from the program manager at ICCF.

KCFOC will monitor the progress of individuals who are referred during regularly scheduled court sessions. KCFOC will use these sessions to provide incentives to the individuals such as scheduling support modification hearings commensurate with participant's ability to pay and propose arrearage forgiveness plans contingent upon the individual meeting milestones in the program. KCFOC will also work with the parents to ensure direct contact between the parents and their child so that they can begin to plan their financial needs as a family.

Evaluation of the Pilot Project

A. Length of the Pilot Project

The pilot project will be for three years.

B. Purpose of Evaluation

The evaluation will determine if there is an increase in the financial well-being of children through the collaboration of local agencies that provide services to educate and assist non-custodial parents in building assets and in improving their financial literacy skills.

C. Resources Available from the Circuit Court

The circuit court will provide case-specific information to the evaluator. The SCAO will help the evaluator secure that information.

D. Reporting

The evaluator will submit reports to the SCAO and the circuit court within time frames agreed upon by the SCAO, the circuit court, and the evaluator.

The contract between the SCAO and the evaluator will specify reporting requirements. Each report will be made quarterly for 12 quarters and should be no longer than 10 pages. The report should describe: (1) Major activities and accomplishments during the project; (2) Problems encountered during the project including any deviations or departures from the original project plan and deadlines; (3) Significant project findings and events; (4) Other pilot activities as identified by the SCAO and the circuit court; and (5) Activities planned for the next reporting period.

In addition to the quarterly reports, the evaluator will file three additional reports. Two annual reports and a final report will summarize the data and findings for all three years of the pilot project.

At least twice during the evaluation period the evaluator will be required to make interim oral reports, supported by the quarterly reports, to the SCAO and the circuit court. The SCAO and the circuit court will provide feedback to the evaluator during these presentations.

Part IV - Scope of Evaluation

The evaluation will involve gathering data (both quantitative and qualitative) to answer the following questions.

Research Questions

- A. For pilot project cases how many days elapsed from the date the NCP was referred to the REACH program to the date the NCP met with an AFI staff person?
- B. How many referrals were court-ordered versus voluntary?
- C. Can court staff (e.g., friend of the court staff, county clerk employees, and judges' clerks) quantify that the pilot project assisted pilot project parents and their children through such processes as increases in current support collections, increases in arrears collections, reductions in the need for enforcement activities, and increases in parenting time?
- D. Which of the pilot project procedures did pilot project parents believe were most useful (e.g., job training, class speakers, counseling services)?
- E. What aspects of the project could be implemented statewide?
- F. What aspects of the project could not be implemented statewide?
- G. What elements of the project were most useful?
- H. What elements of the project were least useful?
- I. What are some of the issues and problems with starting the project?
- J. What were some of the issues related to the local environment (i.e. economy, social)?
- K. Who were the project clients and what were their characteristics?
- L. What clients did well in the project (as defined by the goals of project)?
- M. Who were the stakeholders involved in the project?
- N. Were the project goals and objectives achieved?
- O. Were the project strategies successful compared to NCP's who chose not to participant in the project?
- P. How did participation affect the rate of reliance on public assistance programs and child support payments?

- Q. Did payers who received REACH benefits complete the child support specialty program more often than those who did not?
- R. Did more payers agree to participate in the child support specialty program because they were offered REACH benefits than those who were not offered REACH benefits?
- S. How many orders were reviewed/modified to a realistic obligation based on the NCP's ability to pay?
- T. What other elements does the evaluator believe will track the success or failure of the REACH Project?

Additional Data Collection

In addition to answering the research questions, the retained evaluator will be expected to:

- A. Determine the number of parties who declined participation and why.
- B. Gather demographic and socioeconomic information for pilot and nonpilot groups.
- C. Gather case-related information (e.g., number of children, assets, issues in dispute) for pilot and nonpilot groups necessary to complete the action.
- D. Identify the number of active participants in the program in relation to the number of funded accounts and potential expansion goals for individual sites.
- E. Provide a breakdown of participants by intended IDA account use.
- F. Track the attrition rate for participants.
- G. Track participation in capacity-building activities.
- H. Identify account holders by demographics and beginning assets.
- I. Identify accounts by savings rates, match rates, and withdrawals.
- J. Identify use of saved and matched funds.
- K. Track account holder training by type and length.
- L. Develop a plan to include how objectives, goals, and strategies are going to be measured.
- M. Develop evaluation reports to include short-term and long-term objectives and outcomes.
- N. Identify specific data to be collected and analyzed.
- O. Identify measurement reports necessary.

- P. Develop surveys for clients and court and agency staff, to determine the successes and failures of the project.
- Q. Develop data/reporting process (individuals and agencies that will report, how data will be recorded).
- R. Train court staff and others on how to collect and record data.
- S. Identify measurable outcomes.
- T. Report and share findings.

Methodologies and Assessments

The proposal should explain how the following methodologies and assessments may be used in answering the research questions.

- A. Using data provided by the circuit court, the evaluator will compare pilot cases with non-pilot cases.
- B. The evaluator will review case files from pilot cases and nonpilot cases to assess case progress both prejudgment and postjudgment necessary to complete the evaluation.
- C. The evaluator, with assistance from the circuit court, will survey pilot project parents and nonpilot project parents to solicit information.
- D. The evaluator will conduct focus groups with parties.
- E. The evaluator will interview court staff and judges about the pilot project.
- F. The proposal should contain information about how the prospective evaluator will approach collaborating with stakeholders in the circuit court and the SCAO in order to complete the evaluation.
- G. The evaluator must obtain approval of the entire evaluation plan from an Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRB) before collecting any data. The evaluator should state in the RFP which IRB the evaluator intends to use to obtain approval. The evaluator will comply with all requirements of the IRB, which should include the requirement to obtain written consent from participants in focus groups and interviews and to maintain confidentiality of all participants.

Part V - Proposal Requirements

Bidders must submit a complete response to the RFP using the following format. **Five (5)** copies of the proposal must be submitted to the State Court Administrative Office. Proposals must be signed by an official authorized to bind the bidder. The proposal must remain valid for at least ninety (90) days after **February 18, 2011**.

To be considered, proposals must be received at the State Court Administrative Office, P.O. Box 30048, 925 West Ottawa, Lansing, MI 48909, on or before 5:00 p.m. EST, **February 18, 2011**. Proposals received after this time will not be considered. Mailed envelopes containing proposals should be addressed to:

Connie Daiss
State Court Administrative Office
P.O. Box 30048
Lansing, MI 48909

Proposals may also be hand-delivered and should be clearly marked "Kent County REACH Grant Project-Evaluation Proposal" to the attention of Connie Daiss.

There are no page limitations for responding to the RFP; however, precision and succinctness are important considerations. Proposals must be submitted in the format described in the following outline, utilizing the appropriate captions and item numbers.

Letter of Transmittal

The transmittal letter should be no longer than three (3) pages and should:

- Briefly state the bidder's understanding of the work to be done.
- Indicate that the bidder is able to comply with all the tasks listed in the RFP.
- State the location of the offices from which the bidders will be working.
- State that the person signing the letter will be authorized to bind the bidder in a written contract with the State Court Administrative Office.
- State that the proposal will remain valid for at least **ninety (90)** days after **February 18, 2011**.

Title Page

Identify the name of the bidder, address, telephone number, name of contact person, and the date of the proposal.

Table of Contents

Include a clear identification of material by section and page number.

Proposal

- Submit a detailed and complete explanation of how the evaluation and the tasks listed in Part IV will be accomplished.
- Submit a proposed work plan with tasks and time frames.

- Describe any barriers or challenges bidders anticipate in conducting this evaluation and suggest methods for overcoming them.

Cost and Price Analysis

- Complete the "Proposal Cost and Price Worksheet" appearing at the end of this section. Itemize each cost and price. Only the identified categories may be billed while performing the duties connected with this project.
- Submit a detailed narrative to explain the proposed costs.

Bidder's Experience

Submit a statement and/or a listing of projects that are similar to this one in which the bidder was or is in the lead role. Indicate the scope of the project and any collaborating partners and their role. In particular, describe other projects of a similar nature that involved evaluating human service projects. Also, indicate any experience in working with Michigan's circuit courts. Numerous attachments are neither required nor desired.

- Outline experience in working in the area of evaluation, especially in the field of human services or domestic relations.
- Provide a listing of any articles, books, or training sessions written or conducted by the bidder that are relevant to this project.
- Submit a summary that demonstrates the bidder has a good understanding of the application.

References

- List **four** (4) references that may be contacted by the SCAO to discuss the bidder's work in areas related to the RFP.
- For each reference, include name, title, organization, address, e-mail, and phone number.

Part VI-Financial Compensation Reference Information

A. Personnel and Fringe Benefits

The RFP must include the following information regarding personnel working on the evaluation:

1. The estimated hours on the assignment, by classification of personnel assigned.
2. The rate per hour for each classification of personnel and title.
3. The total fee to be charged for each classification.

B. Travel

Effective January 1, 2011, the following maximum reimbursement rates are being used for travel authorized and reimbursed by the State Court Administrative Office. Reimbursement will be made for actual expenses not exceeding these rates:

| 1. <u>Meals & Lodging</u> | <u>Maximum Rate</u> |
|--|---------------------|
| Lodging (actual supported by receipts) | \$65.00* |
| Breakfast | \$7.25** |
| Lunch | \$7.25** |
| Dinner | \$16.50** |

Exceptions: Wayne County, Oakland County, Benton Harbor, Charlevoix, Mackinac Island, Petoskey, and St. Joseph.

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Lodging (actual supported by receipts) | \$65.00* |
| Breakfast | \$8.75** |
| Lunch | \$8.75** |
| Dinner | \$21.00** |

* Includes taxes

** Includes taxes and tips

Claims for individual meals should be based on the following time guidelines:

Breakfast--When travel commences PRIOR TO 6:00 a.m. and EXTENDS beyond 8:30 a.m.

Lunch--When travel commences PRIOR to 11:30 a.m. and EXTENDS beyond 2:00 p.m.

Dinner--When travel commences PRIOR to 6:30 p.m. and EXTENDS beyond 8:00 p.m.

Travel commences when the claimant begins travel from home or workstation, and ends upon return to home or workstation.

- Reimbursement for meals is allowable only when travel is required out of the city in which the claimant's workstation is located and is within the time guidelines above.
- Claims for miscellaneous expenses such as parking, bridge tolls, etc., will be allowed only if the expense was necessary for the conduct of project business and must be supported by receipts.
- Reimbursement will not be made for alcoholic beverages.

2. Mileage

Mileage will be reimbursed based on rates published by the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court currently reimburses at \$.51 per mile.

Please give a breakdown for each type of expense on the "Proposal Cost and Price Worksheet."

Personnel
 Fringe Benefits
 Consultant/Contractual
 Travel
 Equipment
 Supplies
 Telephone
 Postage
 Printing/Photocopying
 Audit
 Other (specify)
 Direct Costs
 Indirect Costs
 Total

Price Bid for Project: Maximum fee to conduct the evaluation. The price quoted will be the maximum paid.

Additional Information and Comments: Include any additional information or comments that may be helpful to the SCAO's consideration of the proposal.

Selection Process

Each proposal will be evaluated by an SCAO Review Panel with expertise in the area of child support and domestic relations proceedings.

The evaluation panel will make a recommendation to the State Court Administrator for award of the contract. However, the evaluation panel recommendation is not binding on the State Court Administrator. The State Court Administrator reserves the right to cancel the RFP process, reissue the RFP, or enter into contracts with multiple vendors for discrete tasks associated with this project. The decision of the State Court Administrator with respect to the award of a contract or contracts is final and not subject to appeal or review.

PROPOSAL COST AND PRICE WORKSHEET

Applicant: _____

Project Title: Kent County REACH Grant Project-17th Circuit Court

Please list the cost for each line item listed below and also include a total cost.

| ITEM | SCAO FUNDS | OTHER FUNDS | TOTAL |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Personnel | | | |
| Fringe Benefits | | | |
| Consultant/Contractual | | | |
| Travel | | | |
| Equipment | | | |
| Supplies | | | |
| Telephone | | | |
| Postage | | | |
| Printing/Photocopying | | | |
| Audit | | | |
| Other (specify) | | | |
| Direct Costs | | | |
| Indirect Costs | | | |
| Total | | | |